

## Today's Haz-Mat Call in Cary

09/09/10 172 W, 1 I - + 3 - 6

Chemical explosion at [2700 Gateway Centre Boulevard](#). Employee in laboratory mixing chemical compounds, say news reports. No injuries. Minimal interior damage. Most occupants self-evacuated after the explosion. The rest of the building was vacated after fire units arrived. Raleigh haz-mat team requested, and a full haz-mat assignment subsequently dispatched. Alarm time about 2:05 p.m. Units cleared some hours later. Photos by Legeros (below) and Lee forthcoming.



Let's see if we can cover all units on scene.

### Cary

E1, L7, B1, which was Incident Command.

B2, Car 5, Car 20 (Safety Officer)

L1, special called

Who else?

### Raleigh

E14, E8 (which responded with SR2), L7 (which also responded with Decon 1), R3, B3, B4, A1, HM2 (operated by E15)

E14, R3, B4, A1 returned while en route

Car 71 (Haz-Mat Coordinator)

Any others?

### Medical

EMS 54 (Cary), EMS 41 (Apex), EMS 1, EMS 8, D5 (Cary), D2, M92, M94, MD-20, big ol' Truck 1

### Other Agencies

Wake County Fire Marshal

Wake County Emergency Management

Wake County Sheriff's Office

Wasn't Morrisville closer? If so how come closest unit wasn't dispatched?

**JG** - 09/09/10 - 22:15

Yea, Morrisville is a lot closer. That's only about 1.5 miles from MFD station 1. It's probably over 4 miles from Cary station 1. A lot of times Cary will hall butt thru Morrisville to get to one of their calls. CRAZY! It happens all the time, so much for closest station.

**Spanky** - 09/10/10 - 08:08

I have worked in that office complex for a few years. Fire/rescue has been dispatched a few times over the years to our building for false alarms and a couple of medical emergencies. Each time it has been Cary. I wondered about that myself.

**Todd D** - 09/10/10 - 17:49

It may have to do with whether the call comes in by cell or by landline. Calls get routed to 911 centers based on jurisdictions (landlines) but by tower location (cell phones). So if the caller hits a cell tower in Cary, the call goes to Cary 911. MIGHT be an explanation.....

**Skippy** - 09/10/10 - 19:27

Closest unit has nothing to do with it. It never has and probably never will. It's all about revenue. Why would a town want to help somebody who doesn't pay for the town's services? But think about this, a town is more than willing to receive services from a dept. who's willing to provide them for next to nothing. Just think about how many times Raleigh actually goes into the county to assist a volmie dept. Hardly ever! Now think about how many times the county comes into the city to provide service. A lot! I often hear Falls responding into E25 & E22's territory but E25 won't get dispatched into Falls' territory. Same with New Hope and E19. IMO, the county departments are getting the shaft by the city but I guess if the county departments didn't agree to run with the city their existence wouldn't be justified.

**RescueRanger** - 09/10/10 - 21:09

RescueRanger- I agree with you but I don't think it applies in this case. I think generally MFD and CFD have a good working relationship. They do run a lot of mutual aid calls together in both districts. Mo'ville does cover county land and RTP but they are municipal department with tons of tax revenue. I don't think MFD needs CFD to justify their existence. I do agree with you in the examples you mentioned, just don't think that argument applies here.

Skippy- You are correct about the difference with the way the person is calling 911. If you are on a cell phone and you call in MFD district it will go to Cary's call center first. If it calls for a Cary mutual aid unit they will then dispatch their unit into MFD district. THEN they call Raleigh on Tri-Comm and tell Raleigh the nature of the call. THEN Raleigh will dispatch the proper unit(s) to the call. MFD will get dispatched to a fire in Cary and when they mark in route and get on the radio channel Cary will be marking on scene before MFD leaves the bay. I have heard of times where MFD will almost get beat by a Cary unit into MFD jurisdiction because CARY has been dispatched at least 4 minutes before MFD into MFD city limits. Also CRAZY.

**Spanky** - 09/10/10 - 23:00

One of the issues with closest unit response is that when it involves the response of Raleigh or Cary it only applies to the first due unit. So if Cary Eng 7 which shares the station with Mo'ville is closest, then Mo'ville won't get banged out to help fill the run card in some places. Just like in parts of Wakefield or southeast Raleigh where Wake Forest Eng 2 or a Garner Eng is closer as a second due unit then Raleigh's second due eng. This is one of the flaws in the system (not CAD so don't jump on that horse) that won't get worked out probably until Chiefs sit down and discuss staffing and other things.

**Mike** - 09/11/10 - 09:21

It's all about call types and contracts. There are a couple areas that are contracted between Cary and surrounding county FD's. This is not one of them. The call is within Cary's Town Limits, so they go, and provide the service. Morrisville, Swift Creek, Fairview and I believe Apex have areas that are contracted to provide a response into the town limits and therefore they go. Prime examples being calls on the other side of I-40 near the airport that are within Cary Town limits, Morrisville is auto aid. You also have to remember that Cary FD units' statuses are not contained in the RWECC CAD, as County units' statuses are not in Cary's CAD. There is no direct interface, yet.... it is still reliant on Tri-Comm to do the transfer. This is similar as it is with Raleigh not using true closest station dispatching (with the exception of CAD statuses). The municipalities choose to provide that service within their jurisdiction, and choose who runs with them and on what calls.

I know that Cary goes into the county very often automatically, especially in District 6, District 1 and District 7. It is also not uncommon to hear units from District 3, 4 and 5 running into areas with Apex which have been agreed on for "closest" station response. So just as the county goes into Cary for all structure fires, Cary repays that when needed/requested and in some cases automatically.

For the most part Cary FD has an outstanding working relationship with their surrounding department, due to the fact that they interact often both on runs and training. There are also a lot of Cary FFs who either work or volunteer at these surrounding departments. But you have to remember, you go to the call you are dispatched to and let the higher up brass worry about closest station and automatic aid.

But if you need a resource, call for it, just as happened the other day, and I've never had a problem calling for any resource to help me, whether I'm in the county or in the city...

@ Spanky... do you suggest that if a house fire comes into Cary's PSAP that they transfer the call to RWECC for M'ville to get banged out and wait to dispatch the auto-aid Cary unit? Or they dispatch what they can from their center and transfer the call as soon as they can? The system is not perfect, but it's how it works right now, just as with EMS calls that are in Cary, every call goes through Cary 911, first responders get dispatched while the request for EMS is being made through RWECC, get the help there as close as possible, do the job and come home.

**CFP 7021** - 09/11/10 - 11:31

@CFP7021- No I am not suggesting that Cary waits to dispatch a Mo'ville truck(s) on any call. I also hope I am not coming off as too negative because the system is not perfect but it is a lot better than most people have in other places of the state or country. I am speaking for Joe Shmoe citizen. Say you are on the corner of Morrisville Carpenter Rd and Town Hall Drive in Mo'ville. Your house is on fire and you call from your cell phone. Cary gets the call and dispatches Cary Engine 5 or 1, then they begin to transfer the call on Tri-Comm. You start to hear sirens in the background from the Cary unit but still no movement out of MFD station 1. You are like "what the hell", why are these guys not coming. Then finally MFD gets the call and shows up. That's a lot of waiting for that whole process to take place when someone is having a bad day, regardless if it is a fire or medical call. Being an industry that counts seconds I am surprised it evolved this way. That's all. I am not knocking the either CFD or MFD. In my humble opinion, two great departments that work great together.

**Spanky** - 09/11/10 - 13:27

You would think that the brain trusts and powers that be could come up with a CAD-to-CAD interface so that voice communications on Tricom wasn't necessary. This problem will not go away as long as there are multiple PSAPs in the county. The citizens would be better served with just one – and with a closest unit goes always, no matter what – and if an engine was an engine, that could be done. But when CAD and dispatch have to sort out the differences between a Wendell Engine, a Knightdale Engine, and a New Hope Engine (all with different capabilities) you're never going to get true closest unit responses.

**Skippy** - 09/11/10 - 18:48

Thanks to all that responded to my questions. I just have one more thing to say; some may call me a wacker or whatever but I listen to calls dispatched throughout the county almost everyday, for the past seven years and I hear these big departments going with the county depts all the time. That's BS when one dept doesn't call for another when they are so close. But who cares it's Cary's problem and I may be wrong but they are the one who has to maintain a 5 min or less response time to keep their class 1 rating!

**JG** - 09/11/10 - 21:11

The same can be said when Apex responds to Morrisville and has to go through all of Cary because Cary wasn't contacted via tricom and Apex shows up as next closest on the screens downtown. It's an issue with the system and not a problem of attitudes amongst agencies but feel free to spin it anyway you would like. It's the same issue that occurs near county lines all over the place. I'm sure it happens often enough that one unit from county A will be sent to a call in county A even though a unit in county B right next door would be closer. People rarely focus on that but constantly bring up inter-city rivalry or animosity, whether it is real or pretend.

**Joey** - 09/11/10 - 23:13

It's been nice not to have to worry about that since EMS went to AVL-based closest unit dispatch!

**CH100** - 09/12/10 - 08:17

Does Cary have a ISO Class 1 rating?

**Rob Mitchell** - 09/12/10 - 08:29

Now if we could deploy APL technology (automatic photographer locator) we'd REALLY be somewhere!

**Legeros** - 09/12/10 - 09:12

We all know of the downfalls of CAD or different dispatching facilities. In my opinion it comes down to a company officer that knows his territory and the resources he has available to him. If we answer a call where a county unit is closer (maybe we need a rescue and a county rescue would be closer) we would call for the county unit and worry about the details later. It just makes sense.

**firedriver** - 09/12/10 - 22:09

Same Song....different day!

**Wayne** - 09/13/10 - 12:09

Sorry I was corrected by my brother, Cary has a class 3.

**JG** - 09/13/10 - 20:13

The new CAD system that Cary PD is purchasing is supposed to have CAD to CAD interface to be able to interface with the RWECC CAD.

As for M'ville they still get A/A from Western Wake, Apex, Durham City or Durham County on a lot of their structural related calls and NOT Cary FD unless they are requested M/A to the call. And Cary Comms will only dispatch a CFD unit to a location that calls for one, not just on every call that comes into their center.

This is good discussion though, to "clear the air"

**CFP 7021** - 09/14/10 - 22:57

Name: (real name  
preferred)

E-mail: (optional)

Web Site: (optional)

Remember personal info?

Yes

No

Comment:

/ [Textile](#)

Comment moderation is enabled on this site. This means that your comment will not be visible on this site until it has been approved by an editor.

To prevent spam we require you to answer this silly question

**What are the FIRST TWO LETTERS of the word 'fire'?**

[\(Register your username / Log in\)](#)

Notify: Yes, send me email when someone replies.

Hide email: Yes, hide my email address.

**Small print:** All html tags except <b> and <i> will be removed from your comment. You can make links by just typing the url or mail-address.